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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [CIA](#) [IZ](#) [MASS](#) [MCAP](#) [MOPS](#) [NATO](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: MCNS - MUTHANNA, BASRAH, AND BAGHDAD

REF: BAGHDAD 2046

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, A.I. DANIEL SPECKHARD FOR REASONS 1.4
(A), (B), (D)

11. (S//REL GBR AUS JAPAN) SUMMARY: On June 18, the Ministerial Committee for National Security (MCNS) met to discuss security issues in Muthanna, Basrah, and Baghdad. It was decided to announce the transfer of security responsibility for Muthanna from the Coalition to the GOI on June 19. The Basrah security plan was evaluated, with modifications to be made to the Iraqi command structure. The MCNS also evaluated the Baghdad security plan, the implementation of which will be reviewed to improve effectiveness and counter rising insurgent violence. END SUMMARY.

12. (S//REL GBR AUS JAPAN) Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki chaired the MCNS on the evening of June 18. Present for the Iraqis were Deputy Prime Minister Salam al-Zawbai; Minister of Interior Jawad al-Bulani; Minister of Defense Abd al-Qadir; Minister of State for National Security Shirwan al-Wa'ili; Minister of Finance (and former Minister of Interior) Bayan Jabr; National Security Advisor Dr. Mowaffak al-Rubaie; and Iraqi Army Chief of Staff Babikir Shawkt. The Coalition was represented by Charge d'Affaires Speckhard, UK Ambassador Patey, and MNF-I Deputy Commanding General LTG Fry. Topics for discussion were security issues in Muthanna, Basrah and Baghdad.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF TRANSFER
OF SECURITY IN MUTHANNA

13. (S//REL GBR AUS JAPAN) Transfer of security responsibility for Muthanna (reftel) from the Coalition to the GOI is pending. The MCNS decided to make modifications to the way that local security is handled in Muthanna because of problems that had previously arisen with the Basrah Governor's management of security in his province. The MCNS implemented restrictions on the Muthanna Governor's authority to raise his own militia forces, recruit new police personnel who are more loyal to the Governor than to the GOI, direct control of police forces, and affect MNF-I movement. Maliki will decide who would be the lead for handling any crisis in Muthanna, and -- depending on the circumstances -- the Iraqi Police (IP) Commander or Iraqi Army (IA) Commander are the preferred leads.

MUTHANNA READY FOR SECURITY TRANSFER

14. (S//REL GBR AUS JAPAN) Maliki decided that the announcement to transfer provincial security would be made on June 19. A decision for the date of a formal transfer ceremony is pending but likely to be July 14. The MCNS agreed to delay the public announcement of the actual ceremony date for security reasons. It also was agreed that the proposed general Implementing Arrangements and the PM's Security Authorization (which would allow the PM to designate specific individuals to assume lead roles) would be reviewed by Maliki, who agreed to decide this week on their specifics.

PROBLEMS IN BASRAH

15. (S//REL GBR AUS JAPAN) The MCNS then reviewed the Basrah security plan. There was consensus that Basrah is a critical province and that success there could have a ripple effect across Iraq. As such, solid groundwork needs to be laid to permit the eventual transfer of security and to allow provincial elections. There would be leadership changes; Iraqi forces would become more disciplined and effective; and a political/national dialogue would be conducted.

16. (S//REL GBR AUS JAPAN) Current weaknesses in the IP and IA in Basrah are challenges that have to be overcome now, Maliki stated. In order to instill discipline in the ranks, Maliki ordered reform of the IP to remove corrupt elements by prosecuting them. Weak leaders in the IP and IA, he directed, would be replaced by those with strong, proven records. Increased security operations would heighten ISF visibility, deter rogue IP and JAM/militia elements, and reassure the local populace. The MCNS also assigned specific

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missions: the ISF would lead "deter and reassure" operations (checkpoints, joint patrols, outreach to local Sunnis, and increase in surge operations); MNF-I would lead "attrition" operations (arrest, search, and detention operations). Command and control arrangements would be revised, minimizing the Basrah Governor's role and authority in security, with the GOI selecting a trusted person from the Iraqi army as the chair of the Provincial Security Committee (formerly the Governor was the chair).

BAGHDAD

17. (S//REL GBR AUS JAPAN) The Baghdad Security plan commenced on June 14. Maliki requested a review of progress so far and what changes needed to be made. Although attacks initially decreased, there was a follow-on spike of violent attacks on June 17. The MCNS agreed that this spike was an attempt to discredit the GOI's high-profile security initiative. Also, due to certain areas being cordoned off, there is concern that some neighborhoods are short of food and water. Maliki urged for the momentum to continue and requested that the security Ministers review what modifications needed to be made to counter the insurgents and protect the people. Maliki strongly emphasized that setbacks would not be accepted and that if more forces are necessary or additional supplies needed, then they would be brought in from other areas. It was agreed that a formal review will be conducted on June 24.

COMMENT

18. (S//REL GBR AUS JAPAN) COMMENT: Maliki allowed free-wheeling discussions by all those present. Rubaie was extremely vocal in the deliberations, demonstrating his growing influence as NSA. Maliki, however, ultimately called the shots, concluding the meeting with a crisp summation of

the decisions taken and the actions pending -- typical of his
decisive, business-like performance thus far. END COMMENT.
SPECKHARD